

JULY 14 1959

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HONG KONG--DIPLOMATS SAID TODAY THE PRISON TERM OF FIVE AMERICANS HELD IN RED CHINA ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY THE PRESENT VISIT TO PEKING OF THE BROTHER OF ONE OF THEM.

WILLIAM DOWNEY, 25, WENT TO PEKING VIA HONG KONG AND LATER SATURDAY TO VISIT HIS BROTHER, JOHN, 28, WHOSE MOTHER LIVES IN NEW BRITAIN, N.H. JOHN DOWNEY IS SERVING A LIFE SENTENCE ON ESPIONAGE CHARGES.

THE YOUNGER DOWNEY, WHO IS WORKING IN THE FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK OF NEW YORK BRANCH IN SINGAPORE, WENT TO CHINA WITH U. S. DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL. THE STATEMENT OF REGULATIONS FORBIDDING TRAVEL TO RED CHINA WAS DELETED FROM HIS PASSPORT.

ON JAN. 6, 1958, DOWNEY ACCOMPANIED HIS MOTHER AND THE MOTHERS OF HUGH REDMOND, 38, YONKERS, N.Y., AND RICHARD FECTEAU, 31, LYNN, MASS., ON A 20-DAY TRIP TO CHINA TO SEE THE PRISONERS. THEY FAILED, HOWEVER, TO PERSUADE THE CHINESE TO RELEASE THE THREE SONS AND RETURNED TO HONG KONG JAN. 26 AND THEN BACK TO THE U.S.

THE MOTHERS, YOUNG DOWNEY AND SAN FRANCISCO ATTORNEY A. J. WILKIN, WHO MADE THE TRIP AT THE SAME TIME, WERE THE FIRST AMERICANS TO VISIT PEKING IN CHINA WITH U. S. STATE DEPARTMENT PERMISSION. WILKIN WENT TO COLLECT EVIDENCE FOR THE DEFENSE OF JOHN AND SYLVIA POWELL WHO HAD BEEN CHARGED WITH SEDITION FOR ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THEIR SHANGHAI MAGAZINE "CHINA WEEKLY REVIEW" DURING THE KOREAN WAR. THE CHARGES HAVE BEEN DISMISSED.

THE YOUNGER DOWNEY HELD OUT SOME HOPE AT THE TIME THAT THE COMMUNISTS MIGHT IN THE FUTURE CHANGE THEIR MINDS. SO FAR AS IS KNOWN AS OF TODAY THEY HAVE NOT.

YOUNG DOWNEY APPARENTLY IS GAMBLING ON ANOTHER ATTEMPT.

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